

**North Dakota Department of Public Instruction**  
**Dr. Wayne G. Sanstead, State Superintendent**

# **REDUCING THE RISK:**

## **Comprehensive Prevention Education for Youth**

**Middle School and High School Training  
(Grades 6-12)**



**600 E Boulevard Avenue, Dept. 201  
Bismarck, ND 58505-0440  
2010 Edition**

## PREFACE

Why is HIV/AIDS and STD education necessary in North Dakota? While North Dakota remains the state with the fewest people infected with HIV, the number of people with infections steadily increases as do the behaviors that transmit the disease. Additionally, the risk for infection continues to exist among high school students. High school students who reported having intercourse increased from 2007. According to the North Dakota Youth Risk Behavior Survey (2009), approximately 60% of seniors report being sexually active. As both males and females are most likely to initiate sexual intercourse at age 15, education on this risk behavior must occur before this age.

State law as recorded in ND Century Code 23-07-16.1 and ND Administrative Code 33-06-05.6-01 requires all students receive education concerning significant contagious diseases; local school districts determine grade and content level of this education. The Department of Public Instruction recommends this requirement be a part of health education curriculum.

Adolescent sexual behavior is linked to a host of critical social and health repercussions to include a decrease in educational opportunities, lower incomes, unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), and HIV. Secondary factors include risk behaviors of alcohol, drug and tobacco use. Addressing adolescent sexuality should be viewed in greater context than reproduction and nothing less than comprehensive social and personal decision-making. Evaluations of sexuality health educational programs show a delay in the onset of sexual activity, a reduction in the frequency of sexual activity, a reduction in the number of sexual partners, and an increase in safe sexual practices (American Medical Association, Advocates for Youth).

The North Dakota Department of Public Instruction supports comprehensive school-based sexuality education to be part of a comprehensive health education program. According to Sexuality Information Education Council of the United States (SIECUS) (2004):

*"Such programs should be appropriate to the age, developmental level, and cultural background of students and respect the diversity of values and beliefs represented in the community. Comprehensive school-based sexuality education complements and augments the sexuality education children receive from their families, religious and community groups and health care professionals."*

Teaching comprehensive sexuality education is an important and sensitive subject area. The ND Department of Public Instruction is responding to health educators across the state who request guidance on current and relevant curriculum and information on sexuality education as part of health education. *Reducing the Risk: Comprehensive Prevention Education for Youth* is developed to meet the legal requirements for North Dakota's school aged youth. As with any content area, teachers should be properly educated in this subject before

you teach any lesson plan. Communicate with the building principal and follow the curriculum guidelines developed by the district. Additionally, communicate with parents/legal guardians regarding the subject context, offering parents the opportunity to remove their child for any section taught. Allow all parties to preview DVD's, speakers or materials that will be used. Do not use jokes or personal sexual experiences. Finally, do not let personal bias influence teaching.

References:

- Sexuality Information Education Council of the United States (SIECUS). (2004). *Guidelines for comprehensive sexuality education, (3rd ed.)*. Retrieved on January 28, 2010 from [www.siecus.com](http://www.siecus.com).
- North Dakota Youth Risk Behavior Survey. (2009). Have you ever had sexual intercourse? Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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